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RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD PRIORITY 0569
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RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 0546
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 0951
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 0446
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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 05 USNATO 000224

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TAGS: [NATO](#) [PREL](#) [AF](#)

SUBJECT: NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL READOUT JUNE 25, 2008

Classified By: CDA Richard G. Olson for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (S) SUMMARY:

-- Afghanistan: SHAPE briefed on recent events in Kandahar and Arghandab, emphasizing the role of the ANA and the fact that Arghandab was clearly a tactical and logistical win for the ANA. Responding to the briefing, Charge Olson emphasized the importance of the ANA and suggested the need for a larger, stronger ANA. Acting NATO Senior Civilian Representative (SCR) in Kabul Jochems relayed a conversation in which NSA Rassoul and MOD Wardak expressed a loss of faith in the ability of the Pakistani government and military to address its border challenges, and urged NATO to demonstrate to Pakistan it was in Afghanistan "to win." Charge Olson and the Secretary General (SYG) stressed the need for ISAF and the NAC to address proactively the security needs for the Afghan elections now that an August start for voter registration had been agreed in Kabul. The oft-briefed issue of rising violence in RC-East drew particular focus and questions from PermReps. The Danish PermRep asked what NATO could do to dispute spurious charges of civilian casualties leveled at international forces by UN Special Rapporteur Alston. SHAPE briefed on immediate plans for the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit in Garmsir and current ISAF planning to backfill when they leave in October. The German PermRep announced plans to increase Germany's Afghan deployment cap by 1,000 forces, to remain focused on the North, and Denmark noted it intends to deploy an OMLT, double development aid, and do more as part of its Afghanistan Strategy for 2008-2012.

-- Balkans: The CMC reported that meetings between KFOR and Serbian military authorities continue despite the Serbian CHOD's cancellation of his meeting last week with COMKFOR. General Wright from SHAPE reported on heightened tensions between Kosovo Albanians and Kosovo Serbs. General Wright also reported that UNMIK had increased the number of its police by approximately 135 in Mitrovica.

-- Africa: Spanish PermRep expressed his view that the NAC needs to be more engaged on Africa issues and asked for a briefing on Somalia.

-- Iraq: Nothing discussed.

-- Response To Terrorism: Director of the NATO Office of Security (NOS) Mike Evanoff and Assistant Director of the International Military Staff (IMS) for Intelligence Karen

Laino, briefed the NAC on the activities of the Terrorist Threat Intelligence Unit (TTIU) in 2007 and the Work Programme for 2008.

-- Statements on Political Subjects: The Slovenian PermRep provided a readout of NATO-relevant outcomes of last week's European Council meeting.

-- AOB: PE Review: The Chairman of the Military Committee (CMC) informed the NAC that the Military Committee would not finalize its work on phase 2 of the Peacetime Establishment Review by the end of June and proposed setting a new September 2008 timeline. The SYG noted that the underlying reasons for the delay have a "strong political dimension," and cautioned that Defense Ministers should have the final MC report in advance of the October Budapest.

-- Farewell to Chairman of the Military Committee: The SYG bid farewell to Chairman of the Military Committee General Henault, noting his three years as a driving force behind NATO's evolution and expansion, and commending him for his efforts in operations, expanding partnerships and initiating the Comprehensive Approach.

END SUMMARY

AFGHANISTAN

12. (C) KANDAHAR PRISON BREAK/ANA CAPABILITIES: SHAPE DCOS for USNATO 00000224 002 OF 005

Operations MG Wright briefed that COMISAF's main priority for the past week has been supporting Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) in their response to the June 13 attack on Kandahar's Sarpoza prison in which several hundred Taliban fighters were freed. Noting that media reports of OMF fighters massing in Kandahar's Arghandab district were greatly exaggerated, he acknowledged the negative impact the prison break had initially on Afghans' confidence in their government, but said that the Afghan army's quick response had done a lot to reassure the population. In a logistical move "that would have been good for any of our armies, in any circumstance," ISAF and the ANA Air Corps moved three ANA kandaks, (roughly battalion-equivalent), a brigade HQ, and a 120-strong French embedded training team (OMLT) from Kabul to Kandahar, where they immediately began operations in an unfamiliar environment. CMC General Henault and the SYG commended ISAF's strategic communications effort, citing that BBC, CNN, and other major outlets had all aired combat camera footage of ISAF and ANA in action following the prison break, thanks to the new "NATO TV" capability in theater.

13. (C) The Canadian PermRep praised the ISAF and ANA response to the prison break, but noted that given ISAF and ANA force shortfalls, troops had to be pulled from other tasks and operations and sent to Kandahar. He pointed to a familiar dilemma: how would ISAF and ANSF hold this ground in Arghandab that had been efficiently cleared? Charge Olson agreed the excellent performance of the ANA had been key, and noted its increasing prominence and importance in operations throughout Afghanistan. He asked MG Wright if there were enough ANA forces at present, and how their op tempo was affecting their capability. MG Wright responded that ANA op tempo was "extreme" as a result of limited numbers, and cited the growing problem that as CSTC-A graduates more kandaks from basic training, many are without embedded trainers (U.S. ETTs or ISAF OMLTs).

14. (S) NATO/PAKISTAN: CMC Henault cited decreasing pressure by the Pakistan military (Pakmil) on militants in the border region resulting from Pakistani government negotiations and deals with militants. He and MG Wright pointed to the existence of a known, active Taliban training facility in Torkham, Pakistan as an indication of the freedom of

operation OMF enjoy in Pakistan. Acting Senior Civilian Representative Jochems, who participated in the NAC via DVC, gave the Council a readout of a discussion he and visiting NATO Deputy Assistant Secretary General Pardew had recently with NSA Rassoul and MOD Wardak, in advance of Pardew's June 25 travel to Islamabad. He conveyed that the two Afghan leaders realize the need for good relations with Pakistan, but had lost confidence in the ability of both the civilian government and Army Chief of Staff Kayani to take effective action in the border regions. Jochems said that he and Ambassador Pardew had asked about what, if any, leverage NATO had on Pakistan and the messages Pardew should deliver. Rassoul and Wardak highlighted: the Pakmil would likely be more responsive to arguments from their Arab financiers and China rather than the West; international pressure on Afghan-Pakistani interactions, such as the jirga process, Tripartite Commission, and Border Coordination Centers, can be useful; NATO must show Pakistan it is serious about Afghanistan and is in Afghanistan "to win;" public rhetoric by officials of the two countries should be ratcheted down; Pakistan's civilian government needs to raise the priority of its engagement in the border regions and realize its importance to Pakistan's national interest.

¶5. (C) The UK, Italian, and Turkish PermReps commented on a workshop they had attended on June 21 in Rome, in which Pakistan's United Nations PermRep had participated. UK PermRep Eldon commented that the Pakistani had made almost every argument that Rassoul and Wardak had, except in reverse, and predictably defended his government's negotiations with militants. Italy urged the SYG to go to Islamabad soon and stated that the Pakistani UN PermRep seemed to be in a state of denial. Turkey argued for continued engagement, despite frustrations with the current Pakistani government. Spain pointed out the danger of the SYG traveling during the uncertain political environment in

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Islamabad, asking "who is running Pakistan?" In response to a Dutch question, MG Wright noted that ISAF's supply lines from Karachi remain fully open, despite recent threats by Pakistani militants to kill truck drivers who deliver supplies to international forces in Afghanistan. The Canadian PermRep stated that NATO needs a "structured relationship with the civilian side in Pakistan" in order to complement the military Tripartite Commission relationship, and asked that COMISAF brief the NAC prior to August on his efforts to revive the high-level TPC dialogue. The SYG reiterated his intent to have an in-depth discussion among PermReps, in order to develop the message he will give to Pakistani officials when he travels, at a yet-to-be-determined date following DASG Pardew's return from Islamabad.

¶6. (C) ELECTIONS: Charge Olson highlighted A/SCR Jochems, June 24 report to the NAC that the Afghan government had finally reached an agreement that would allow security planning for voter registration to advance, starting perhaps as soon as August 2008. He stated that the Council should closely follow this, and examine, with appropriate military input, whether ISAF would need additional resources to play its part, and whether the ANA had enough resources to fulfill its role. SYG de Hoop Scheffer strongly supported this intervention, concluding that the NAC should begin proactively mapping out the run-up to 2009 elections, and identifying questions and challenges.

¶7. (C) VIOLENCE IN RC-EAST: The issue of increasing violence in RC-East has become a prominent topic in NAC discussions over the past weeks. CMC Henault briefed that the level of OMF activity in RC-East at present was double the level of this time one year ago. He stated that Kunar and Paktika provinces were most active due to their presence on the border near main OMF support bases in Pakistan, but MG Wright also briefed on an increase in attacks in RC-East's "inner" provinces. In response to a UK question, MG Wright stated

that the majority of incidents were OMF-initiated, but noted SHAPE was working to standardize various reporting databases in order to get a more accurate picture of this in the future. Bulgaria expressed concern at mounting violence in the east, stating that irrespective of how one parsed it, OMF activity in RC-East was on the rise and there was a need "to act more efficiently." COMISAF will meet with Pakistan Army Chief Kayani later this week, Wright reported, to discuss the border region and seek to revive high-level TPC talks.

¶8. (C) CIVILIAN CASUALTIES: The Danish PermRep cited the recent report that UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial Executions Philip Alston delivered to the UN Human Rights Council, in which he charged that international forces in Afghanistan had killed 200 civilians in the first four months of 2008. He asked if NATO could release estimates of civilian casualties caused by ISAF, versus those caused by OMF. The SYG stated that according to NATO statistics, the OMF had killed 300 civilians so far this year, and ISAF had killed 20. Without addressing the issue of public releasability, he assured the NAC that NATO is actively engaging Alston on this issue.

¶9. (C) OPERATIONS UPDATE: In his operational overview, MG Wright noted that the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit has changed plans to establish FOB Rhino on the Kandahar/Helmand border given its success in Garmisir, and will instead seek to consolidate gains and prepare the ANSF to establish an enduring presence in southern Kandahar. ISAF is presently planning to backfill the MEU when it leaves in October with an ANA kandak, and elements of UK Task Force Helmand. MG Wright noted increased OMF activity in Farah and parts of Nimroz province, as OMF maneuver around the MEU in Garmisir en route to northern Helmand.

¶10. (C) OTHER INTERVENTIONS: The German PermRep told the NAC the German government intends to increase its troop ceiling by 1,000 up to a total of 4,500 when the ISAF mandate is debated in the Bundestag in mid-October. He stated this increase is due to the German takeover of the RC-North QRF, the withdrawal of forces from RC-North by other nations,

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German intentions to increase ANA training, and the need for flexibility in the run-up to 2009 elections in Afghanistan. He was careful to note that German planners do not necessarily intend to plus up to the full 4,500. He was clear: the German focus will remain on RC-North. The Danish PermRep informed the NAC that his government had recently approved an Afghanistan Strategy for 2008-2012, which will double Danish development aid, strengthen efforts for ANA capacity building (Denmark plans to deploy a garrison OMLT by 2009), increase troop levels to 750 from the current 665, and also deploy a field hospital and commo equipment.

BALKANS

¶11. (C) The CMC reported that despite the Serbian CHOD's cancellation of his meeting with COMKFOR last week, the meeting of the Joint Implementation Committee was still held on June 19. General Wright said that tensions between Kosovo Albanians and Serbs had increased since the June 15 entry into force of the Kosovo Constitution, but had not resulted in any outbreak of violence. Wright noted that the upcoming K-Serb celebrations and marches to mark the anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo Polje on June 28 and the intention of the Serbs to convene a parallel assembly on the same day would also contribute to tensions. As a result, KFOR has raised its security posture and will continue to conduct an increased operational tempo to ensure the safe and secure environment. Lastly, General Wright informed the Council that UNMIK had increased the number of its police with the deployment of a formed police unit of approximately 135 personnel in Mitrovica. In response to a Dutch question

regarding the willingness of UNMIK police to deal with the tense security situation, Wright said that the fact that UNMIK has not melted away is a good sign, but that one cannot gauge personnel readiness or willingness until they are faced with a challenge. The SYG concluded by saying that his discussions with COMKFOR had left him with the impression that KFOR could be called on very quickly if there is a complete breakdown in security.

Africa

¶12. (C) The Spanish PermRep said that the frequent lack of comments on Africa during meetings of the NAC was insufficient in light of NATO's support to the African Union and the "appalling" developments in Sudan and Somalia. He requested that the NAC receive a briefing on Somalia and Sudan. The SYG responded that A/SYG Martin Erdmann is contacting the UN this week to discuss Africa, and proposed organizing written reports on the situation in both countries.

Response to Terrorism

¶13. (C) NATO Office of Security (NOS) Director Mike Evanoff and Assistant Director of the International Military Staff (IMS) for Intelligence Karen Laino provided the third annual report of the NATO Terrorist Threat Intelligence Unit (TTIU).

TTIU is jointly directed by Evanoff and Laino, and they noted that TTIU is unique in reporting to both the civilian and military sides of NATO. Its mission is to report on existing and emerging threats. In 2007 it provided 44 reports, and is slated to provide 32 during 2008 (though the number will rise due as the unit responds to requests for specific reporting). With staffing at a premium, TTIU welcomes its national experts (Voluntary National Contributions) and its interns. TTIU has been a tool for outreach to Partners and now has programs with MD, ICI, and PfP formats as well as Australia and New Zealand. Six of the seven MD countries participate, because Egypt has not yet signed a security cooperation agreement with NATO) something that Evanoff is working with the Egyptians to address. In this context, Evanoff urged Allies to consider whether more of their domestic intel products could be

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released to Allies and Partners. Looking ahead, Evanoff noted that Al Qaeda and its associated groups will continue to be a focus of reporting, as will state-sponsored terrorist groups such as Hezbollah. There is likely to be continued activity by separatist/nationalist groups and by groups with environmental/social causes. Evanoff commented that the threat to Europe from Pakistani extremists remained a focus.

¶14. (C) U.S. Charg Olson welcomed the good cooperation between IMS and IS and asked about TTIU's resources, to which Evanoff responded that he would like to expand the staff. The SYG seconded Evanoff's call for more resources, albeit for NATO as a whole. Turkish Ambassador Ildem requested TTIU provide a follow up to its December 2007 report on the PKK and commented that, while TTIU's products are not formally agreed by all 26 Allies, they still should not be written so as to be a source of contention. German Ambassador Brandenburg requested a report on terrorist radicalization and recruitment. Canadian Ambassador McRae requested that analysis of ISI links to terror groups be included in the scheduled Pakistan report.

AOB

¶15. (C) Review of NATO Peacetime Establishment: CMC informed the NAC that the first draft of Phase II of the PE Review was

circulated to Allies on June 6, but it looks unlikely that the report would be finalized by the Military Committee by the end of June deadline set by Defense Ministers. The CMC portrayed the draft as a significant improvement over the status quo in NATO's military command structure, but said there had been extensive comments from nations ranging from refinements to questions on affordability, civilianization, outsourcing, and other issues. The CMC proposed setting a new September 2008 timeline (a formal request will be submitted to the SYG shortly) and urged bringing the review to conclusion ASAP.

¶16. (C) The SYG noted that the underlying reasons for the delay have a "strong political dimension". The SYG cautioned that Ministers should have the final Military Committee report in advance of the October 2008 Defense Ministerial.

Farewell to Chairman of the Military Committee

¶17. (U) The SYG bid farewell to Chairman of the Military Committee (CMC) General Henault, noting the CMC's three years as a driving force behind NATO's evolution and expansion, and commending him for his efforts in operations, expanding partnerships and implementing the Comprehensive Approach. General Henault expressed his thanks to the SYG and colleagues. Gen Henault will retire after leaving his post next week and will be replaced by Italian Admiral Giampaolo di Paola.

OLSON